



REPORT  
of the  
UNITED STATES DELEGATION  
to the  
WORLD CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR  
Mexico City  
Mexico

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*Patricia Hutar*

Patricia Hutar  
Chairman of the Delegation

Prepared by: Shirley Hendsch  
IO/LABW

10. Conclusions

A. Appraisal of the work and accomplishments of the Conference

From the point of view of the United States the Conference, which was one of the most significant human rights initiatives taken by the United States in the United Nations in recent years, can be credited with a substantial record of accomplishments in promoting equality and the full participation of women in all aspects of political, social and economic life of their nations. Its impact will be wide ranging and of growing consequences in the years to come.

The adoption by consensus of a World Plan of Action, a principal US objective will have the most sweeping and long-range effect since the guidelines are flexible and sufficiently broad to meet the most urgent needs of women in eliminating discrimination and ensuring their full participation in their societies. In addition, the United States took the initiative in presenting four resolutions that signaled subjects for special attention which were passed with strong support of the Conference participants: 1) women in development a resolution advocating "impact studies" for projects to be carried out by United Nations agencies similar to those used in the US bilateral AID programs through the Percy Amendment; 2) education; 3) women in UN agencies and 4) women on national delegations to United Nations meetings. Two other resolutions that will be of continuing impact are those dealing with family planning and the full integration of women in development and a resolution that establishes the International Research and Training Institute for the Promotion of Women.

It was inevitable that the Conference was politicized to a degree. But not to such an extent that it failed to take action on women's issues. There were the usual number of political resolutions that reiterated familiar positions taken in other UN forums on Chile, Palestine, Panama Canal, etc., which were duly registered. But the real substance of the Conference dealt with women's issues and it is on these that the impact of the Conference will be felt.

It was inevitable that the economic issues of the New International Economic Order (NIEO) and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States (CERDS) were raised partly because developing countries feel strongly that these are related to women's rights and partly because the Government of Mexico regarded this as their price for hosting the Conference. It was regretted that the United States could not support the Declaration of Mexico because of references to Zionism and to the CERDS and the NIEO and a few resolutions that were unsatisfactory to the United States and on which the United States cast a "no" vote. However, the significant fact was that the resolutions on women's issues and the World Plan of Action were left substantially intact and the United States was able to support them.

The US Delegation makes the following recommendations concerning the work of this Conference:

1. The Government of the United States should give strong support at the next General Assembly meeting to the Iranian proposal that was also co-sponsored by the US for the convening of a second world conference in 1980 by the UN system.

2. The Delegation recommends also that the Government of the United States redouble its efforts to seek rapid implementation within the UN System for those resolutions introduced by the US Delegation and for extensive and intensive implementation of the World Plan of Action in order to maintain the US interest in this important Human Rights initiative within the UN.

3. It further recommends that the Department of State bring the World Plan of Action, particularly the section entitled "National Action", to the attention of other Federal agencies so that they may begin now to implement the world plan. It further suggested that a mechanism be devised to assure a continuing review and appraisal of national progress made under the plan so that a report may be available for the world conference on women proposed for 1980.

4. The Department of State and the Bureau of International Organization Affairs should ask the US Mission to the UN redouble its efforts to encourage the UN Specialized Agencies to accelerate the rate at which women are being integrated into their employment patterns and into the projects and programs of the respective UN agencies.

5. The Conference has made it clear that a worldwide women's movement does exist, despite varying conditions of economic and social development and that this movement will become a greater force in the future. Special measures should be undertaken to examine the movement more carefully in the future and to attempt to harness these human resources and ideas in such a way that women will no longer be margined from the decision making and development process that will shape the future. It is essential that the US permit itself to be identified with this important Human Rights initiative increasingly in the future.

6. It must be recognized that one of the major resources awaiting development are the women of the third world. Policy makers, at present primarily male, assume that the issue is "women's liberation", and therefore culturally imperialistic. It is neither. The issue is how to enable all people to be more productive in order to reduce poverty.

7. The US Government should continue to press the view that equality and development are interrelated and therefore indivisible for women. It must continue to reject Third World claims that national development problems need to be solved before women's lives can be improved. This argument ignores the fact that women's work is part of the solution to this pressing world problem. The work of the World Conference supports this conclusion.